

Butte-Silver Bow Study Commission Minutes

Meeting Date: March 10, 2005

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Place: Butte-Silver Bow County Courthouse, 1st Floor Conference Room

Call to Order: *Co-chairman* Dave Palmer brought the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He proceeded to call roll with the following results:

Members Present: Dave Palmer, Tony Bonney, Ristene Hall, Meg Sharp, Cindi Shaw, Northey Tretheway, and Shag Miller. Ron Rowling and Shelly Jones were also present.

Excused Absence: Bob Worley and Wayne Harper

Others Present: Ann Drew, Greg O'Leary, Ellen Crain, Judy Strand, LeRoy Cottom, Danette Harrington and Lori Maloney.

Approval of Minutes: Shag Miller made a motion that the minutes for the March 3, 2005, meeting be approved. The motion was seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Comments from Ron Rowling: Ron reported that after further research and after going through the minutes of the Council of Commissioners regarding a committee that was going to be set up regarding fines, he has found no information. Mary McMahon is working on the budget amounts for her office (Clerk & Records, Land, & Elections) and she is also gathering information on populations. Ron has a current list of all the service/civic clubs and organizations. He suggested that the clubs and organizations contact him so he could make arrangements for members of the Study Commission to speak to them. Ron also talked to Linda Sajor-Joyce regarding ~~a contingency plan~~ an IT plan for the IT network so that the Study Commission can compare it to other counties. He reviewed the agenda and changes for the March 24 meeting. Shag Miller suggested that it might be more appropriate and effective if Ron contacted the service organizations to set up appointments for presentations.

Citizen Comments: None

Items not addressed on the Agenda: None

Guest Speakers:

Greg O'Leary, Public Administrator for Silver Bow County reported that he handles estates for people that have no heirs, but he is not limited to that. Sometimes the heirs live in other towns or states; even heirs in this county ask him to be a personal representative, a neutral person. He is a guardian for several people and a VA payee.

Following are Greg's responses to questions asked of him by Co-chairman Dave Palmer: His salary is three (3%) percent of the first \$40,000 and two (2%) percent after that. As a payee, the VA allows four (4) percent and if he is court appointed it can go up to five (5) percent. Greg does not get paid a salary from Butte-Silver Bow's budget; everything he makes is a percentage from the estate. He has a budget of \$120 per year. As far as he knows, other counties have public administrators. Cindi Shaw asked if he was an attorney-at-law. He is not. Cindi asked him what his background was and if he needed a legal background to do his job. He reported that he usually has an attorney in place. Greg does not have specified hours that he works in his fourth floor office. He can be contacted on his personal cell phone. He has assisted people with wills. He covers death cases where the person is in testate. Dave Palmer asked if the Study Commission could do anything to improve his operation or services. Greg said that he is having problems with theft and the meth problem. He has had three people arrested just with one estate. The thieves work in broad daylight. He works with antique stores and pawnshops to retrieve stolen items. The antique stores haven't been keeping records per a 1977 ordinance where they are supposed to report purchases daily with descriptions of the people who sold them. Meg Sharp asked if there was any penalty if the pawnshops and antique stores do not comply with the law. Greg reported that there is a penalty and it is one of his goals is to get them to comply with the ordinance. Shag Miller asked what his average income was per year. Greg said it varies from nothing up to \$10,000. Northey asked if Greg's position was subject to county budget guidelines or does he come under any kind of audit. He reported that he does not. Co-chairman Dave Palmer thanked Greg for coming.

Next, Ellen Crane, from the Butte Archives gave her presentation. Brian Holland and Dori Skrukrud could not make this meeting. Ellen introduced Meg Sharp as a member of the Friends of the Archives Board of Directors and she introduced her Administrative Assistant, Judy Strand. Ellen began by informing the Study Commission that the Friends of the Archives provided a \$2,500 grant to have a preservation assessment done. She presented a PowerPoint presentation (a handout was provided and is on file). Ellen described the history of the Archives Building. Topics of her presentation included the purpose of the archives (in 1981 a city/county ordinance stated that the Butte-Silver Bow Archives is to be the official repository of all non-current records of Butte-Silver Bow Government), the Archives is also authorized to acquire, maintain, and preserve historical documents, photographs, maps, etc. pertaining to the history of Butte-Silver Bow. Anything outside of Butte-Silver Bow is directed to an appropriate repository. The Archives also provides public access, which is crucial to their mission to ensure that people have access to the historic information. They also educate the public and schools in the community. Ellen reported on the structure of the Archives (as the Archives Director, Ellen reports to the Council of Commissioners first and then she reports to the Chief Executive). There is an advisory board of directors appointed by the Chief Executive and approved by the Council of Commissioners. The seven Advisory Board members are Brian Holland, Laurel Egan, Elaine Howard, Marissa Newman, J.R. Richardson, Tim McLain, and Sara Sparks. She also gave details on the Archives budget (\$113,542), the support the Archives provides government departments (especially the law enforcement department and, in particular, the work created by the Brady Bill),

record destruction procedures, assistance given to researchers/scholars, the volume of the records (6,000 feet of historical records for Butte-Silver Bow and one of the most complete set of records), the processing of approximately 100 collections per year, they serve 4,000 people per year (one of the busiest in Montana), presentations given, problems with the storage of their records in the building, the threat to archival collection (safety, stability, temperature, humidity, light, pollution, pests, handling, theft, and water), and the value of the records. There are no environmental controls, disaster preparedness, little security, limited storage and handling. She further explained the findings from the study. Eleven requirements are needed to bring the building up to archival standards. They were awarded a \$3,500 grant to develop a disaster plan. They have come up with a cost of \$1.5 million to address the requirements. The Board is determining if it is worth putting that much money into the Archives Building. She then shared with the Commission how the Friends of the Archives assist the Archives in meeting their mission. Members are Dori Skrukrud, Meg Sharp, James Dorr Johnson, Brian Holland (archives liaison), Ann St. Clair, and Gail Barrett.

Dave Palmer asked what the Study Commission could do to aid the cause of the Archives. Ellen Crain raised the fact that the budget issues are huge. They have needs for additional staff, a fire suppression system, and they do not have sufficient funds for grant matches for example. Cindi Shaw stated that our treasures need to be protected. Dave Palmer thanked Ellen for her presentation.

Next, Co-Chairman Dave Palmer introduced Ann Drew from the Butte-Silver Bow Library. She had a handout for everyone. Ann Drew stated that public libraries in Montana are established under the provisions of Montana Code Title 22, Chapter 1, Part 3. She began by giving the history of the Butte Public Library. The Chief Executive appoints the Library Board of Trustees. There are five (4) trustees on the board. The trustees are responsible for appointing or hiring the librarian who operates the day-to-day operations of the library. The Library Board also approves policies and are responsible for the building. They meet on the second Wednesday of each month. The library budget of \$640,000 comes from the general fund. The library uses Butte-Silver Bow services for payroll, computer services, personnel and maintenance, which are paid for out of their budget. Part of the budget comes from State funds. Ann Drew's presentation included discussion regarding the State Library Commission, the Montana Library Association, the American Library Association, the Butte-Silver Bow Library missions and goals, library hours, State library standards, materials provided to the public, the budget, special services (computers and Internet access, databases), inter-library loans, public meeting rooms, fax machines, copy machines, kiosks (for tax forms), and services provided by the library. Ann also went over some of the statistics that she provided in the handout. She reported the Library has 15 staff members (8 full-time, 7 part-time).

Dave Palmer asked what the Study Commission could do to help the Library improve services to the citizens. Ann replied that funding and staffing are big issues. Cindi Shaw asked if Ann thought the building was adequate for their needs. Ann reported that they constantly weed the collection. There is space available, but they would need funding for

additional staff. On their wish list is additional parking for patrons. They also haven't had any building maintenance for ten years and they have air conditioning problems.

Ellen Crane asked if the Library had any budget increases in the last five years. Ann Drew said they have not. Ellen said that the Archives and Library have been stagnated for five years. There have been no cost of living increases to keep up with the rising costs of books, publications, and materials. The book budget is \$50,000 with \$7,800 being spent on periodicals. The State cut funding after the last legislature session.

Survey Report: No report was given at this meeting.

Items not addressed on the agenda: A memo from the Office of Finance and Budget Administration was passed out to the Study Commission members for review.

Date for Next Meeting: The next meeting will be Thursday, March 24, 2005.

Adjourn: Co-Chairman Dave Palmer entertained a motion to adjourn. Northey Tretheway made a motion to adjourn, and Shag Miller seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.